

Helpless

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Summary: Takes place before the end of Half-Life 2: What if Judith Mossman hadn't defied Dr. Breen?

Helpless

(Mod's Note: This is most likely not going to have more than just this chapter. I've spent the last week or so constantly playing Half-Life 2 and it's sequels. And since I've got a combined 70+ hours, I thought maybe I should write something about it.)

His head hurt. Badly. There was a steady throbbing at the base of his skull, so ferocious it made him close his eyes and slowly shake his head, clenching his teeth to hold back any kind of howl or screech. He was no stranger to pain, no stranger to it at all, but the HEV suit he wore regularly supplied morphine when he did get banged up. It detected lacerations, blunt trauma, but it couldn't detect headaches.

First thing was first. Where was he? He struggled to recall what he'd encountered previous, or even figure out where he was, but that stupid headache stubbornly persisted in distracting him from the task at hand. It frustrated him to no end. This wasn't rocket science, it was literally just figuring out where he was and why he was there.

Had his employer dropped him here?

No, not his style. As vague and cryptic as his words regularly were, the man always spoke. Even if it was just fanciful fluff, meaningless exposition without any kind of instruction, he always said something or another.

The throbbing in Gordon's head weakened, and he was distantly aware of footsteps. As rattled and battered as he felt, he had to weakly attempt to defend himself. What lay around him?

He was in the corner of someplace, dark and metal, reminding him

distantly of the Combine and their forces. He was still in the Citadel, then. Which meant nothing good, considering his unarmed state and the complete, bone-deep fatigue that had taken hold.

Nothing. As near as he could figure, there was nothing. The room was slightly dark, cold, and he was left with nothing except his suit. Red and blue lights shone high above, too high for him to reach, casting an ugly, odd lighting about the small space. Well. He wouldn't stoop past punching Combine if it came to it, even if he preferred proper weapons. Going out fighting seemed the best way to do it, even if it came to such complete and utter helplessness as resisting with arms and legs rather than with his own wit and his massive arsenal.

Muffled voices.

Gordon tilted his head.

"If both of the Vances will not speak out for humanity, Freeman will." Dr. Breen's voice, sounding as though he were on the edge of shouting in frustration. His patience was wearing thin with whoever he was conversing with. A cold feeling of hatred bubbled up in his stomach.

"Ha! You've got to be kidding me, Breen. If you think Gordon would damn every citizen in all of City Sevent-" A familiar voice, jaunty and loud, abruptly cut off by a sharp thump. Gordon's heart sunk.

Barney? Breen had Barney? How long had he been out? A sharp chill of fear ran down his spine, accompanied by a duller sense of helplessness. Despite his legendary status, as the ferocious, indestructible symbol of freedom, it came with hearty responsibility. Doing the toughest jobs, fighting the most dangerous fights, often with an in-your-face combat style that inspired countless rebels and let them join the fray as back-up to the unstoppable god-like man among them. But even he couldn't stop his old Administrator from doing what he willed, now that it was evident he had Eli, Barney, and Alyx within his grasp. It wouldn't surprise him if he had Kleiner, as well. Everyone left from the Black Mesa incident, even.

No. No. Gordon let out a deep exhale, quietly calming himself. His employer wouldn't have set him an impossible task. There was a way out of this, Gordon was certain. Whether he screwed it up or not was the only thing deciding their fates; and he was determined to be clever enough to get them out of it.

Once again, everything was riding on Gordon. He oft got tired of shouldering responsibility like this, holding the weight of the world on his shoulders. Sometimes he tried to console himself with a thought: someone else would take up the fight in his absence; some rebel among the thousands would pick up where they left off. But picking off five of the main resistance leaders at once would be a gigantic morale-crusher, and the fight might just be given up altogether.

Gordon heaved himself to his feet, taking a steadying breath as he focused on his goals. He had to free himself from this prison and

destroy the Citadel as planned.

End
file.